



National Aeronautics and  
Space Administration  
**Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center**  
Houston, Texas



## Safety standown

Employees spend the day learning about safety and Total Health issues. Photos on Page 3.



## Inspiring minds

JSC employees host Clear Creek ISD students during Career Day. Story on Page 4.

# Space News Roundup

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## Blaha, Lucid agree cooperation key to success

Cosmonaut Researcher John Blaha and former Researcher Shannon Lucid agree that the success of long-duration space flights depends not on equipment, but on the people involved with the mission.

As Blaha and his crew mates continued living and working on the Russian Mir Space Station, both he and Lucid spoke about work on the station last week. Lucid summed up her record-setting stay with what she said was the take-home lesson.

"I think the most important thing for success on a long-duration space

flight... it's not the hardware, it's not your science experiments, it's the people you fly with," Lucid said.

Blaha and his Mir 22 crew mates, Commander Valery Korzun and Flight Engineer Alexander "Sasha" Kaleri, agreed with Lucid that the people make a flight successful.

"It's beyond my expectations," Blaha said. "This is an incredible space station. I am very impressed with it, I'm very impressed with Valery and Sasha, the work they do here.... They're incredible cosmonauts."

Blaha's commander had similar praise for the American.

"He (Blaha) is an excellent person, a good specialist, an outstanding astronaut, a wonderful investigator, so (we) have no problems with our crew, neither with the Russian or American sides," Korzun said.

The experiences and remarks of both the past and current crews of this joint effort in space demonstrate time and again how remarkable it is that fears of the past have given way to friendships and working relationships which are helping to advance

all mankind, they said.

"It dawned on all three of us at once how remarkable it was that here we were, three people who grew up in totally different parts of the world, mortally afraid of each other," Lucid said. "Here we were sitting in an outpost in space together, working together and getting along just great. That was a remarkable revelation to the three of us. We never could have planned that."

Blaha and Lucid also agreed that international cooperation should not end with the space stations, but

should continue into the future with the human exploration of Mars.

"I think that people should realize that long-duration space flight is possible," Lucid said. "It's a very positive experience. From a very personal standpoint... I would like people to think that human beings being in space for a long time is no impediment, like for a trip to Mars."

"Once a day I take some time to go on a dark pass to look at the planets," Blaha said. "Every time I look at Mars I say 'we ought to go, Please see **LININGER**, Page 4

## Some workers may take off to vote

Tuesday is election day, and JSC employees whose work schedules conflict with their ability to vote have the options of excusing themselves for a reasonable time to visit the polls if their absence will not seriously interfere with operations.

Valerie Michaud of JSC's Human Resources Office said that as a general rule, where the polls are not open at least three hours before or after an employee's regular hours of work, that employees may have an excused absence that will permit them to report for work three hours after the polls open or leave work three hours before the polls close.

Because the polls in Texas open at 7 a.m. and close at 7 p.m., this policy means that employees who work from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. may be granted half an hour, and that those who work from 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. may be granted an hour.

Employees on irregular (first 40-hour) tours of duty may be granted up to an hour excused absence for voting purposes as long as the leave Please see **FEDERAL**, Page 4



JSC Photo by Robert Markowitz

**Bo Atkinson and other members of the Ellington Field Fire Department give live demonstrations on the best techniques for extinguishing fires during Safety and Total Health Day. The Fire Department also demonstrated how to extinguish jet fuel fires and other types of combustibles.**

## Managers still eyeing Nov. 8 launch

By James Hartsfield

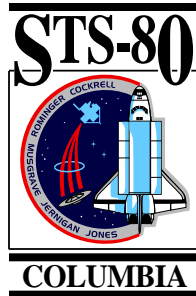
Following a Monday flight readiness review, shuttle managers maintained the option of launching *Columbia* as early as Nov. 8 on STS-80, but deferred setting a firm date for one week to allow further analysis of a solid rocket motor nozzle erosion seen after STS-79.

Managers plan to reconvene Monday to discuss the results of the nozzle erosion problem's continuing analysis, and will decide at that time whether to proceed with a Nov. 8 launch.

During post-flight inspections of the STS-79 solid rockets, technicians noted about 60 deeper-than-normal pits and accompanying troughs in the carbon composite insulation of the right rocket nozzle. The carbon composite was determined not to have worn enough to pose any threat to STS-79, however engineers began an analysis of the pitting and erosion. Preliminary findings indicated that even with the phenomena seen on STS-79, sufficient safety margins could exist, although the investigation remains inconclusive at present.

Meanwhile, Kennedy Space Center technicians continue to prepare *Columbia* at Launch Pad 39B, completing checks of the payload connections with interface verification test for ORFEUS-SPAS and the Wake Shield Facility. Work also began to close out *Columbia*'s engine compartment. The STS-80 crew—Commander Ken Cockrell, Pilot Kent Rominger and Mission Specialists Tammy Jernigan, Tom Jones and Story Musgrave—will fly to KSC Monday if the "go" is given for a Nov. 8 liftoff, and countdown would begin at noon CST on Tuesday with a launch at 1:47 p.m.

Elsewhere, work continues in the Bay 3 shuttle hangar to prepare *Atlantis* for a launch in mid-January on STS-81, the fifth shuttle-Mir docking. Work this week included installation of the drag chute, functional testing of the docking system and tests of the two auxiliary power units. Early next week, work will begin to install *Atlantis*' three main engines. In the Vehicle Assembly Bldg., the two STS-81 solid rockets have been stacked and are ready for mating.



## Goldin reemphasizes non-discrimination policy

NASA Administrator Daniel S. Goldin is continuing to champion cultural diversity in the agency's work force, and recently issued a statement explaining NASA's policy prohibiting discrimination.

"I am personally committed to achieving and ensuring a workplace that is free of discriminatory treatment and harassment on the basis of race, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, color, religion, age, disability or any other nonmerit-based factor," Goldin said. "There is no place in our work environment for discriminatory actions of any kind. My personal commitment to diversity, equality and nondiscrimination is long-standing and nonnegotiable."

"All NASA managers and employees have a responsibility to uphold this policy. Each employee must be personally

accountable for his or her performance in ensuring and promoting equal opportunity principles and in recognizing diversity as a source of strength for NASA. Moreover, managers and employees alike must work together to ensure a workplace free from any form of discrimination or sexual harassment," Goldin continued.

"Both discrimination and harassment are violations of the law as well as the policies of this agency. If you feel you have been the victim of discrimination or harassment, there are a variety of remedies available for redress, based upon the specific facts of the particular incident. Contact your supervisor, local union representative, or servicing personnel office for assistance."

"To assist with compliance, the personnel, equal employment opportunity, and legal staffs will continue to educate employees about NASA's nondiscrimination policy and inform them about the various procedures available to safeguard their rights," Goldin said.

"However, our commitment must go far beyond mere compliance with the law. I am requesting the support of all managers in welcoming responsibility for nurturing and capitalizing on the very best that every employee has to give. I am also asking all employees to understand that a diverse workplace means a better NASA."

For more information, contact JSC's Equal Opportunity Programs Office at x30600, or the Human Resource Office at x36251.

## Mars Surveyor launches Wednesday

NASA's Mars Global Surveyor—one of three missions to Mars that will begin exploring Earth's planetary neighbor—is scheduled for launch Wednesday.

The Surveyor, carrying six scientific instruments to study the atmosphere, surface and interior of Mars, is set to launch at 11:11 a.m. CST Wednesday.

The launch marks the next step in Mars exploration which, according to scientists, is to obtain an overview and to verify remote observations with measurements taken from the ground. Surveyor is designed to study the atmosphere, surface and interior systematically over a full Martian year.

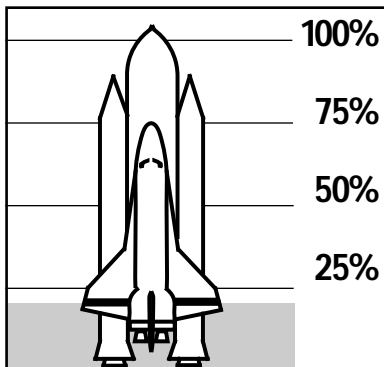
Surveyor will arrive at Mars on Sept. 11, 1997. By March 1998, the orbiter will be ready to begin data collection, compiling a systematic database as it surveys the Martian landscape and photographs unique features, such as the polar caps and Mars' network of sinuous, intertwining river channels.

Surveyor will be followed by two additional orbiters later this year. Russia's Mars '96, an orbiter carrying

12 instruments plus two small landers and two penetrators, is scheduled for launch Nov. 16, with NASA's Mars Pathfinder, carrying a lander and small rover robot, set to lift off Dec. 2.

Launch of the spacecraft begins a new initiative by the United States to send pairs of spacecraft to the red planet every 26 months through 2005.

NASA's new decade-long program of robotic exploration—known as the Mars Surveyor program—takes the next step in expanding scientists' knowledge of Mars. The unifying theme of the Mars program is the search for water, which is a key requirement for life, a driver of climate and a vital resource. Early missions will focus partially on finding and understanding the past and present state of water on Mars. Mars Global Surveyor and Mars Pathfinder will be the forerunners in this quest, leading a series of missions that may culminate in the first few years of the next century with robotic return of a Martian soil sample to Earth, followed by eventual human exploration.



1996 GOAL: \$460,000



## Safety concerns prompt traffic policy changes

JSC is revising its drivers' handbook this week, and, due to an increased number of deer/vehicle accidents, the Avenue B speed limit will be decreased to 35 mph today.

The new Vehicle Code, effective today, realigns point assessment for most violations, updates most traffic safety rules and includes violations to account for Texas traffic laws not previously covered.

According to Security, the Avenue B speed limit reduction is designed to increase driver reaction time, and, therefore, the probability of safety to both the employees and the resident wildlife. Upon entering Gate 4 the Please see **VEHICLE**, Page 4